

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL IN IRISH TIMES MARCH 10, 1978

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN IRISH TIMES
MARCH 10, 1978 UNDER HEADING SPLIT LEVELS:

IT MAY WELL BE, AS THE BRITISH FOREIGN SECRETARY
INSISTED YESTERDAY, THAT THERE IS COMPLETE
AGREEMENT "AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL" BETWEEN
WASHINGTON AND LONDON ON A JOINT POLICY TOWARDS
RHODESIA/ZIMBABWE. BUT DR. OWEN'S UNEXPECTEDLY
EARLY RETURN FROM THE UNITED STATES, IN
CONJUNCTION WITH A CRITICAL STATEMENT BY MR.
ANDREW YOUNG, THE US AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED
NATIONS (A STATEMENT LATER WITHDRAWN), GIVES
THE IMPRESSION THAT UNANIMITY DOES NOT EXTEND
TO OTHER LEVELS OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION,
WHOSE INFLUENCE IS FAR FROM NEGLIGIBLE.

INDEED, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER
AND SECRETARY VANCE MAY PRIVATELY SHARE THE
RESERVATIONS ON BRITISH INTENTIONS WHICH WERE
EXPRESSED BY MR. YOUNG, WHO IS KNOWN FOR HIS
PROPENSITY FOR THINKING OUT LOUD, SOMETIMES
TACTLESSLY. YET HE KEEPS HIS JOB AND THE
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CONFIDENCE OF THE PRESIDENT. PERHAPS HE IS
AMONG OTHER THINGS, AN UNOFFICIAL KITE-FLYER
WHOSE INDISCRETIONS ARE CALCULATED AND
SIGNIFICANT.

ON THIS OCCASION MR. YOUNG WONDERED, FOR ALL
TO HEAR, WHETHER THE BRITISH WERE ABOUT TO

RUN OUT ON THE US, BY SUPPORTING THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT IN RHODESIA AT THE EXPENSE OF THE ANGLO-US PROPOSALS, WHICH ARE STILL ON THE TABLE. THIS WAS THE KIND OF THING THEY HAD DONE, HE REFLECTED, IN THE CASE OF THE PALESTINE MANDATE IN 1948, LEAVING BEHIND THEM 30 YEARS OF TURMOIL IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

WHETHER INTENTIONAL OR NOT, THE EFFECT OF THE INCIDENT HAS BEEN TO RATTLE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND TO EXTRACT FROM IT PROTESTATIONS THAT IT IS NOT BACKING AWAY FROM A JOINT POLICY. THE FOUNDATION OF THAT POLICY, OF COURSE, IS THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE EXTERNALLY-BASED PATRIOTIC FRONT IN ANY FINAL SETTLEMENT. THE PRIME MINISTER TOLD THE HOUSE OF COMMONS YESTERDAY THAT THE AREA OF THE INTERNAL AGREEMENT MUST BE EXTENDED TO INCLUDE THE FRONT: EVEN MRS. THATCHER, WHO, AS LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION, HAS SUPPORTED THE INTERNAL ARRANGEMENT FROM THE BEGINNING, CONCEDED THAT PATRIOTIC FRONT INVOLVEMENT WOULD BE AN IMPROVEMENT. MAYBE SHE, TOO, FELT A BREATH OF COLD AIR FROM WASHINGTON.

THE LATENT IMPORTANCE OF THE YOUNG AFFAIR IS IMPLICIT IN THE LENGTHS TO WHICH THE BRITISH UNCLASSIFIED

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FOREIGN OFFICE HAS GONE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT HAS NO IMPORTANCE AT ALL. DR. OWEN, WHILE SWEARING TO HIS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH MR. YOUNG, COULD NOT RESTRAIN HIMSELF AT ONE POINT IN AN INTERVIEW YESTERDAY FROM POINTING OUT THAT, IN THEIR TIME, THE AMERICANS HAD REGULARLY BROKEN UN SANCTIONS OVER RHODESIA IN THE MATTER OF OIL SUPPLIES: HIS GOOD FRIEND'S REFERENCE TO PALESTINE AND 1948 EVIDENTLY PROBED A BRUISE.

THERE IS NO SHORTAGE OF SIGNS OF AMBIGUITY IN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TO THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. THIS OBVIOUSLY ALARMS AND ANNOYS THE US GOVERNMENT, WHICH ONLY WOKE UP TO THE IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA IN THE LAST PHASE OF DR. KISSINGER'S LONG RULE IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT. MR. YOUNG MAY HAVE TALKED OUT OF TURN, BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN HE WAS TALKING NONSENSE. KRENE

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